



Early Journal Content on JSTOR, Free to Anyone in the World

This article is one of nearly 500,000 scholarly works digitized and made freely available to everyone in the world by JSTOR.

Known as the Early Journal Content, this set of works include research articles, news, letters, and other writings published in more than 200 of the oldest leading academic journals. The works date from the mid-seventeenth to the early twentieth centuries.

We encourage people to read and share the Early Journal Content openly and to tell others that this resource exists. People may post this content online or redistribute in any way for non-commercial purposes.

Read more about Early Journal Content at <http://about.jstor.org/participate-jstor/individuals/early-journal-content>.

JSTOR is a digital library of academic journals, books, and primary source objects. JSTOR helps people discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content through a powerful research and teaching platform, and preserves this content for future generations. JSTOR is part of ITHAKA, a not-for-profit organization that also includes Ithaka S+R and Portico. For more information about JSTOR, please contact support@jstor.org.

provincial cities. These chapters are typical of the scholarly care which Mr. Lowell has bestowed on his task; and in them also are evidences that Mr. Lowell has come into close and personal touch with the men whose work in municipal government he is describing. Moreover he has caught the spirit which actuates most of these men—the spirit of pride and conscientiousness in this sphere of political activity—which perhaps more than anything else explains the almost uniform success that attends the working of English municipal institutions.

EDWARD PORRITT.

The Housing Problem in England. Its Statistics, Legislation and Policy.

By ERNEST RITSON DEWSNUP, M.A. (Manchester: The University Press. 1907. Pp. vii, 321.)

Professor Dewsnap's book on the housing problem consists of three distinct parts, each of which is a valuable contribution to economic science. In Part i, Professor Dewsnap tries to give a clear and definite account of the evil with which authorities in England are called upon to cope. Avoiding all special pleading and all evidence of the sensational kind which is apt to give a false idea of the extent and intensity of the evil of overcrowding, he does not on the other hand fall into the error of minimizing the evil. By statistical tables, compiled chiefly from the census returns, he establishes the fact that overcrowding is not so stupendous a problem as has been imagined, and that of recent years the evil has been growing less. The proportion of population affected varies in different boroughs from little more than half of 1 per cent in Bournemouth, to 34.8 per cent in Gateshead; but out of the 84 largest boroughs in England 42 had less than 5 per cent of the population living under conditions of overcrowding, *i. e.*, more than two to a room. Of the remaining 42, 20 had between 5 and 10 per cent; 14 between 10 and 15 per cent; two between 15 and 20 per cent; one between 20 and 25 per cent, and 5 between 30 and 35 per cent. The variation in overcrowding in towns of a similar character is very remarkable. Plymouth, for example, has 20.19 per cent of its population overcrowded; while Portsmouth has 1.19, and to take an example from industrial England, of the two Lancashire towns of Warrington and Wigan, Wigan has 13.38 Warrington only 3.8 per cent. Professor Dewsnap has not undertaken to explain the causes of these divergences. It would be an interesting study, and would do much to enable the public to judge of the efficacy of the remedies which Professor Dewsnap advocates, to inquire into

the reason why one borough should make so much better a showing than a neighboring borough apparently so similar in its nature and conditions, its industry and its population; and to discover whether more vigilant and efficient local government, or varying conditions of land tenure have had most to do with the better housing of the poorer inhabitants.

In Part ii, Professor Dewsnap gives a most excellent and well digested summary of the legislation which has been passed by parliament since 1851 to cope with the evils of overcrowded houses, and of overcrowded areas, or "overhousing" as the author terms it. These laws include sanitary acts, and acts facilitating the clearing of insanitary areas, and the erection of new dwellings, either by private enterprise or by the local authorities. Many of these acts, which were passed under pressure of public opinion after a scourge of smallpox or cholera, remained a dead letter; and Professor Dewsnap is careful to inform his readers as to just how far the legislation has been put into operation. In Part iii, the strictly informational and statistical work of the previous parts is utilized by the author to support his own conclusions as to the best methods of dealing with the problems of overcrowding. Professor Dewsnap deprecates strongly any tendency of local authorities to substitute municipal building and house owning for private enterprise. He is not opposed to municipal ownership of public utilities, when these are of the nature of a monopoly. But in a house monopoly by the municipalities, he sees both financial risk and moral danger, and his conclusion is that the duty of governments in regard to overcrowding is limited to a strict performance of police duty—an insistence on the laws concerning overcrowding being strictly observed by landlords and tenants; to a possible object lesson in the form of model dwellings that may serve as a standard both for builders and tenants; and perhaps also to the provision of barrack dwellings under strict surveillance for that undesirable residuum which must be housed, but for which the provision of decent and comfortable homes seems an impossibility.

The point on which modern reformers would be most likely to take issue with Professor Dewsnap is the question of taxation of ground values. Apparently, Professor Dewsnap is too easily discouraged by the difficulties in the way of laying a tax on the owners of urban land. The idea of confiscation of any property now in existence may at once be put aside as out of the question. The whole course of British legislation is wholly opposed to such a disregard of private rights. In no country are vested interests considered more sacred, and even if, by

some revolution, the house of commons should in a momentary fit of enthusiasm pass some radical or socialistic legislation which might threaten the rights of the land owners, the house of lords stands firmly and securely in place to prevent any such injustice or spoliation. But that some effort should be made to secure for the community the future increment of value in urban lands is being more and more keenly felt in England, not only by labor men and socialists, but by many of the staid and respectable tradesmen, merchants, manufacturers and professional men who make up the English borough councils; and it may well seem that Professor Dewsnap brushes aside too hastily and cavalierly the strong movement that took bodily shape in parliament during the session of 1907 in the land values bill.

Whether or not the reader agrees with Professor Dewsnap in the conclusions he draws from his data, every student of economics must be grateful to him for the accuracy and care which have gone into the collection and arrangement of his material. Overcrowding is not yet the problem in American cities that it is in Great Britain; but in New York and in the cities that are following its example in the erection of great blocks of tenements the question of overhousing, as distinct from overcrowding, bids fair to become a much greater problem than it has ever been in the worst London or Glasgow slums, and a study of the question in England might suggest many considerations to those who have at heart the welfare and the future of our great cities.

A. G. P.

The Sanitary Evolution of London. By HENRY JEPHSON, L.C.C.
(Brooklyn: A. Wessels Company. 1907. Pp. 440.)

Fifteen years ago Mr. Henry Jephson wrote *the Platform: Its Rise and Progress in England*. It carried him into a new and untrodden field, and he produced a book which at once took rank among the standard monographs on English constitutional development. Its usefulness and its immediate acceptance as a standard work warranted the expectation of other monographs on constitutional history from Mr. Jephson's pen. But within a few years after his *History of the Platform* appeared, Mr. Jephson became immersed in London municipal politics, and until his monograph on the *Sanitary Evolution of London* was published at the end of 1907, his public activities were confined to his membership of the London county council. Obviously it is his close and practical interest in the municipal problems of London that suggested his second